floating streams. Nor is any such contractor allowed to trade in timber during the currency of his contract.

(3) The question does not arise, in view of the answer to parts (1) and (2).

MR. A. GOVINDA MENON (*Alangad* cum *Parur*): Will the Government be pleased to state whether any near relatives of these same contractors possess depôts near the same depôt?

MR. S. PARAMESVARA AIYAR (*Secretary to Government*): Government are not aware.

Sale of Timber by Contractors at Government Depôts.

173. MR. A. GOVINDA MENON (*Alangad* cum *Parur*): Will the Government be pleased to state:

(1) whether they do not allow sale contractors to keep and sell the timber purchased by them from Government depôts at those depôts;

(2) whether, if they do so allow, such a course does not prejudicially affect the sale of timber left unsold at such Government depôts at the time; and

(3) whether in all those cases they charge any ground-rent for permission to keep and sell such timber and whether there is any time-limit for such permission?

MR. S. PARAMESVARA AIYAR (*Secretary to Government*):

(1) The answer is in the negative, if by the expression 'sale contractors' the member means purchasers of timber from depôts.

(2) and (3) These questions do not arise, in view of the answer to part (1).

Mortality among Wild Elephants.

174. MR. A. GOVINDA MENON (*Alangad* cum *Parur*): Will the Government be pleased to state:

(1) whether the Divisional Forest Officer, Northern Division, has reported that mortality among wild elephants was unusually large in that Division in 1098;

(2) whether, in case such a report has been made, Government have made any enquiry as regards the mortality of wild elephants in the other divisions of the State and whether they will state the results of such enquiry, if any;

(3) whether they have received any report as to the number of wild elephants washed away by the flood that occurred during the latter part of 1098 in the Periyar, and whether, if such a report has been received, they would state the number of cow elephants and tuskers so washed away, as also whether in each case any *mahazar* was prepared by the forest authorities; and

(4) whether they will enquire whether there were any cases of shooting wild elephants by the owners or servants of the registry holders of the lands lying alongside of the High Range road?

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[Mr. M. N. Pillai.]

MR. S. PARAMESVARA AIYAR (*Secretary to Government*): (1), (2) and (3) Government have received no report in the matter either from the Divisional Forest Officer or the Conservator of Forests.

(4) The Conservator of Forests says that no case of elephant-shooting by the registered holders of lands lying alongside the High Range road or by their servants has been reported.

Medical Examination of Retiring Officers.

175. MR. M. R. MADHAVA VARIAR (*Chengannur* cum *Pattanamtitta*): (*a*) Will the Government be pleased to state whether any particular person is appointed or asked to ascertain the physical fitness and other qualifications of retiring officers?

(*b*) Will the Government be pleased to state whether officers are examined by a Medical Board before they are asked to retire or their service is extended?

MR. K. GEORGE (*Financial Secretary to Government*): (*a*) and (*b*) In cases where officers retire voluntarily after 25 years of service or are retired after attaining 55 years of age, no opinion is required or taken in regard to their physical fitness for further service or efficiency. When, however, officers apply for invalid pension, medical opinion is obtained in regard to their physical fitness. The rules regarding the conduct of medical examination in such cases are contained in Articles 290, 330 *f* and 330 *k* of the Service Regulations. The service of officers who have attained 55 years is not extended unless the sanctioning authority satisfies itself that the officers concerned are physically and mentally quite fit to discharge their duties.

MR. M. R. MADHAVA VARIAR (*Chengannur* cum *Pattanamtitta*): With respect to the latter portion of the answer, may I know whether the sanctioning authority satisfies itself that officers are physically fit to discharge their duties by medical examination?

MR. K. GEORGE (*Financial Secretary to Government*): No, not by medical examination.

MR. M. R. MADHAVA VARIAR (*Chengannur* cum *Pattanamtitta*): Then, how do they know they are physically fit?

MR. K. GEORGE (*Financial Secretary to Government*): Because the officers under whom they work can see personally whether they are physically fit or not.

Excise Committee.

176. MR. M. N. PILLAI (*Trivandrum*): Will the Government be pleased to state the reasons why they did not allow the Council to elect the non-official members to the Excise Committee as was done with regard to other committees?

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